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## House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WALKER).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,  
April 28, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MARK WALKER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

### VOTING RIGHTS AMENDMENT ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, when the Supreme Court ruled in 2013 to invalidate the preclearance formula in the original Voting Rights Act, it issued a challenge to Congress to pass an updated one. That is a challenge Congress must accept. Until Congress acts, millions will continue to face barriers at the ballot box.

On April 18, The New York Times editorial board highlighted the disturbing and flawed argument that preclearance

is no longer necessary. Obviously, the Congress of the United States found otherwise.

The editorial stated: "This process . . . stopped hundreds of discriminatory new laws from taking effect, and deterred lawmakers from introducing countless more."

The process to which they were referring was the preclearance process that the Supreme Court threw out. The editors cited a new study that analyzed more than 4,000 rights cases.

They write again: "The study provides the most wide-ranging empirical evidence yet that Congress was amply justified in finding that voting discrimination remains concentrated in the covered States and regions."

When we reauthorized the Voting Rights Act in 2006, Mr. Speaker, we did so with an overwhelming vote of 390-33 in the House. In the Senate, Mr. Speaker, it was 98-0. There was no confusion, there was no doubt in the minds of the Congress of the United States, and that bill was signed by President George Bush. It was an overwhelmingly bipartisan conclusion that preclearance was still necessary some 45 years after the passage of the Voting Rights Act.

This has traditionally been an issue that brings Democrats and Republicans together, and I am proud to have co-sponsored a bipartisan compromise bill sponsored by Republican former chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary, JIM SENSENBRENNER, who was the sponsor and chairman of the committee when the reauthorization was effected in 2006.

The bill that we have introduced, called the Voting Rights Amendments Act, with Republican former chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary, JIM SENSENBRENNER, and Ranking Member JOHN CONYERS, as well as JOHN LEWIS—great hero of the civil rights movement—that would answer the Supreme Court with an updated preclearance formula, as they suggested. In fact, in

the past 2 years since the Court's ruling, we have seen a resurgence of efforts to limit when and where minorities can vote.

The editorial goes on to say, Mr. Speaker: "Voting discrimination no longer takes the form of literacy tests and poll taxes. Instead, it is embodied in voter-ID laws, the closing of polling places in minority neighborhoods, the elimination of early-voting days and hours, and much more."

Mr. Speaker, I hope the House will take up a bill to restore the Voting Rights Act without delay and crack down on these discriminatory practices that only serve to weaken our democracy by excluding millions of voices that deserve to be heard.

2015 is the 50-year anniversary of the passing and signing of the Voting Rights Act. That act was achieved only after some died, many bled, and a large number participated in the march from Selma to Montgomery.

That galvanized American public opinion and led the Congress to pass one of the most significant civil rights and democratic rights bills of its history. Congress has the responsibility to act and act now.

As I close, Mr. Speaker, let me remind the Members of the Congress that I discussed this with the majority leader. The majority leader indicated that we would have discussions about bringing Voting Rights Act to the floor, as did I and Mr. Cantor, his predecessor as majority leader.

I look forward to those discussions to facilitate and to speed the bringing to the floor of the bipartisan restoration of the protections in the Voting Rights Act amendments.

Mr. Speaker, I will insert into the RECORD the editorial reference.

[From the New York Times, Apr. 18, 2015]

VOTING RIGHTS, BY THE NUMBERS

When the Supreme Court struck down the heart of the Voting Rights Act in 2013, its main argument was that the law was outdated.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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